

REMARKS

The Office Action rejects claims 9 and 19 as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Dependent claims 10, 20 and 21 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten into independent form.

Applicants disagree with the nature of the rejection for the reasons of record. Nonetheless, to facilitate prosecution, the subject matter of claims 10, 20 and 21 have been converted to independent form. Specifically, claim 9 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 10, claim 19 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 20, and claim 21 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 19 (pre-amended version). Claims 10 and 20 have accordingly been cancelled.

The noted amendments are without prejudice. Applicants intend to pursue the scope of the rejected subject matter via continuation application and appeal.

In view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

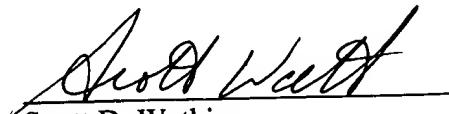
Please note that any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, that have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

If a telephone conference would be of value, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

SWEETAPPLE
Patent Appln. No. 09/833,802

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge/credit any fee deficiencies or
overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-4293 (Order No. 12492.0027).

Respectfully submitted,



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